1735 Highland Place. Apt. 25
Berkeley, Ca. 94709
March 24, 1971

The Washington Post
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Today's S.F. Chronicle carries your story on FBI methods as revealed by stolen FBI records which were sent to you. I am enclosing evidence from the files of the Warren Commission which confirms one of the implications of the article: that the FBI regularly obtains "confidential" information from banks and similar institutions without properly using the subpoena power.

The standard procedure was apparently for the FBI reports of this confidential information to note that it could not be obtained or made public without the issuance of a subpoena duces tecum. When the Warren Commission wanted to publish such information, it then issued a subpoena.

Attachment A to this letter is such a letter, from the General Counsel of the Commission to the NYC Welfare Department. I believe this letter speaks for itself, especially the last sentence: "... we have issued the subpoena only so that there will be no question that you have previously acted pursuant to lawful authority." This shows clearly how much the legal safeguards on "confidential" information mean in practice.

Attachment B is the subpoena referred to. The records in question are set forth in full in the published Hearings of the Commission (CE 2213, pages 18-24; Attachment C). (Although there is no specific reference in those pages to the confidential nature of the information, as described in Attachment A, page 18 happens to include the standard qualification for similar confidential information on the previous page.)

I am including Attachment D to show that the Commission apparently had a standard form letter for this purpose, and to provide you with a clearer copy of the text (which is identical to Attachment A, word for word). (Attachments A, B, and D are from the Commission's files in the National Archives, where you may obtain better copies, if you wish.)

As you know from the Attorney General's request that you not publish the records that were sent to you, the FBI is not eager to have such irregularities in its procedures publicized. In this connection, I am enclosing a page which reveals FBI access to confidential information and was published by the Commission (CE ~~1141~~; CD 75, page 400; Attachment E). The FBI asked that this page be withheld at the Archives, and it still has not been officially released there. (It is conceivable that the published page is incomplete or misidentified, but I expect that the FBI simply asked that it be suppressed without noting that it had already been published.)

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This handing of confidential information is merely a very minor example of the procedural irregularities that are reflected by the Warren Commission's files. I could document for you several instances where apparent procedural inadequacies resulted in the keeping of important substantial information from the Commission's attention. I would be glad to discuss this with you further, if you plan to follow up today's story.

This letter is not for publication; you may use any of this information without reference to me. Could you return the enclosed postcard so I will know if this has reached the reporter who wrote the article? Since I have seen only what appears to be a heavily edited version, I would appreciate a copy of the full article on the stolen FBI records.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Paul L. Hoch
Paul L. Hoch

bcc: HW (w/att. A,B,D)
JNS (w/att. D)